

Message Text

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ACTION AF-06

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C O N F I D E N T I A L ADDIS ABABA 0675

WASHINGTON FOR AID/W

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: LDOR, ET, SO

SUBJ: REPORTS OF U.S.AID'S DIVERSION OF SHABELE RIVER

REF: A) MOGADISCIO 0076; B) 75 ADDIS ABABA 1468 C) STATE 9461

1. RE REF A, USAID/E DROUGHT REHABILITATION SUPPORT INVOLVING SETTLEMENT

OF NOMADS/SEMI-NOMADS BETWEEN GODE AND KELAFO ALONG WABE SHEBELLE RIVER

IS PRESENTLY LIMITED TO AN INVESTMENT OF US\$700,000 OUT OF TOTAL PROJECT

COST OF US\$1,176,000. ACTIVITY AGREEMENT BETWEEN USG AND ETHIOPIA CALLS

FOR SETTLEMENT/TRAINING OF 2500 FAMILIES AND DEVELOPMENT AND IRRIGATION

OF 2000 HECTARES OF LAND ON EITHER SIDE OF RIVER. THIS USG FUNDED
ACTIVITY, AS SUCH, IN NO WAY THREATENS RIVER FLOW INTO SOMALIA OR
CONTEMPLATES TOTAL RIVER DIVERSION. WATER EXPERTS HAVE ESTIMATED THAT
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UP TO 20,000 HECTARES OF LAND ALONG LENGTH OF WABE SHEBELLE COULD BE

IRRIGATED WITHOUT SIGNIFICANTLY AFFECTING NORMAL SOMALIA USE.

2. MISSION KNOWS OF NO PLAN, US OR OTHERWISE, TO INVEST US\$29 MILLION IN WABE SHEBELLE VALLEY EMPLOYING ISRAELI NATIONALS OR ANY OTHER NATIONALITY. AS FAR AS WE KNOW, THIS IS PURE FABRICATION. HOWEVER, SEE PARA 4 BELOW. (PLEASE NOTE THAT \$29 MILLION FIGURE QUOTED PARA 2 REF A APPROXIMATES TOTAL AMOUNT OF US DROUGHT RELIEF TO ETHIOPIA.)

3. BEYOND US-FINANCED ACTIVITY, HOWEVER, EPMG, FACED WITH PROSPECT OF RETAINING REFUGEES IN RELIEF SHELTERS INDEFINITELY, IS MOVING IN A VARIETY OF WAYS NOT ALWAYS CLEAR TO MISSION TO INVOLVE DESTITUTE NOMADS IN IRRIGATED AGRICULTURE ACTIVITIES ALONG WABE SHEBELLE. MUCH OF THIS IS AD HOC, MUCH OF IT IS INITIATED BY NOMADS THEMSELVES WITH EPMG KNOWLEDGE OR SANCTION. IN FACT, THERE IS A GREAT DEAL OF UNESTIMATED PUMPED (IRRIGATED) AGRICULTURE BEING IMPLEMENTED ALONG THE RIVER, BUT TO OUR BEST KNOWLEDGE IT HAS YET TO REACH THE POINT WHERE THIS RESULTS IN ANY GREAT REDUCTION OF RIVER FLOW INTO SOMALIA. WE DO KNOW THAT DISTRICT ADMINISTRATORS BELOW GODE HAVE BEEN ORDERED BY EPMG TO SHARPLY RESTRICT PUMPING,, STOPPING ENTIRELY DURING LOW RIVER FLOW PERIODS, TO AVOID POTENTIAL INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL PROBLEMS.

4. EPMG RECENTLY CREATED (11/7/75) A WABE SHEBELLE RIVER VALLEY DEVELOPMENT AUTHORITY FOR THE PURPOSE OF PROVIDING IMPROVED CONTROL/ COORDINATION OVER USE OF THE RIVER AND AS THE VEHICLE FOR LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT. THAT LONG-TERM DEVELOPMENT MAY INVOLVE EVENTUAL CONSTRUCTION OF TWO DAMS, ONE ON RIVE ABOVE GOBA AND THE OTHER NEAR IMI AND FOLLOW THE LINES OF AN EXTENSIVE PROPOSAL PREPARED BY A FRENCH SURVEY CONDUCTED BETWEEN 1969 AND 1975. COMPLETE COST OF THAT ACTIVITY, WHICH WILL INVOLVE LIVESTOCK, SETTLED AGRICULTURE, HYDRO-ELECTRIC DEVELOPMENT, ETC., OVER AN EXTENDED PERIOD, IS PROBABLY NEAR \$100 MILLION AND ITS FUNDING PROSPECTS AT THE MOMENT ARE NOT OPTIMISTIC. IN ANY CASE, AS PROPOSED, ETHIOPIA TAKES EXTREME CARE TO MINIMIZE ANY REDUCTION OF FLOW INTO SOMALIA AND TO MAINTAIN VERY PRECISE FLOW REGULATION DURING DRY PERIODS. OBVIOUSLY, HOWEVER, THE PRESENCE OF DAMS ON THE RIVER, WHICH COULD BE USED FOR POTENTIALLY POLITICAL PURPOSES INVOLVING TOTAL WATER CUT-OFF, WILL CONTINUE TO WORRY THE SOMALIS.

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5. IN ADDITION TO GODE/KELAFO ACTIVITY, MISSION IS CURRENTLY CONSIDERING ONE OTHER SMALL (250 HECTARE) IRRIGATED SETTLEMENT SCHEME AT DOLO ON SOMALIA/ETHIOPIA/KENYA BORDER UTILIZING RIVER FLOW FROM THE DAWA AND GENALE RIVERS. OUR TOTAL INVESTMENT IN THIS ACTIVITY IS US\$150,000 OUT OF A TOTAL PROJECT COST OF \$300,000. IT IS MORE PILOT/TRAINING AND FIRST-PHASE THAN A LARGE, FULL-SCALE PROJECT AT THIS TIME. AS WITH GOE, THERE HAS BEEN A CERTAIN, BUT GREAT DEAL SMALL, AMOUNT OF PRIVATE INITIATIVE SHOWN BY SEMI-NOMADS UNDER

DROUGHT PRESSURE IN THAT AREA. TO OUR BEST KNOWLEDGE THERE ARE SOME 17 SITES IN DOLO AREA AVERAGING ABOUT 100 HECTARES EACH UNDER VARYING FORMS OF IRRIGATION -- MOST BY RIVER DIVERSION CHANNELS, HOWEVER, AS OPPOSED TO DIRECT PUMPING. IN THIS CASE, A GOOD DEAL OF THE FLOW RETURNS TO THE RIVER.

6. MISSION WILL EXPLORE THIS OVERALL SUBJECT IN GREATER DEPTH WITH EPMG WATER RESOURCES, MINAG AND RELIEF COMMISSION AND ADVISE OF ANY FURTHER RELEVANT DETAIL. HOWEVER, WE BELIEVE THAT THE BASIC PROBLEM STEMS FROM CONTINUED ABSENCE OF A TREATY GOVERNING RIPARIAN RIGHTS OF ETHIOPIA AND SOMALIA FOR USE OF THE WABE SHEBELLE AND OTHER RIVERS BORDERING BOTH COUNTRIES. UNTIL SUCH A TREATY EVENTUATES, THE INDIVIDUAL PLANS OF EACH COUNTRY FOR USAGE OF THEIR COMMON RIVERS MAY BE EXPECTED TO CONSTITUTE CONSTANT SOURCE OF FRICTION BETWEEN THEM.

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